

The Enterprise Network

LANs • WANs • Network Management

"It was like a bleeding artery, and we had to stop the bleeding. We didn't have a clue how to market [high-end] switches direct to large users."

- Paul Richman, chairman of Standard Microsystems Corp., on the sale of its money-losing switching division to Cabletron

Briefs

Vines management

Banyan Systems, Inc. in Westboro, Mass., plans to bundle a management utility free of charge with its StreetTalk for Windows NT directory and Vines 7.0 network operating system. Admin ToolBox Lite from NetPro Computing, Inc. in Scottsdale, Ariz., will add server, service and mail management capabilities to the Banyan offerings.

WAN savings

Ascend Communications, Inc. is shipping NetWarp Pro, a device that lets Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) users save on wide-area network charges by using the links to carry telephone calls. Today, many use ISDN lines for data communications and a separate line for voice calls. NetWarp Pro costs \$349.

Bay adds Web support

Bay Networks, Inc. has enhanced its Optivity software for managing its network devices, expanding switch support and enabling access to some reports through the World Wide Web. Now managers can view connections through Bay's Centillion switches and direct switched traffic to a specific port for analysis by an attached probe. Optivity Enterprise 7.1 applications cost \$5,995. Optivity Campus 6.1 costs \$3,495.

Exchange workflow gets help from third parties

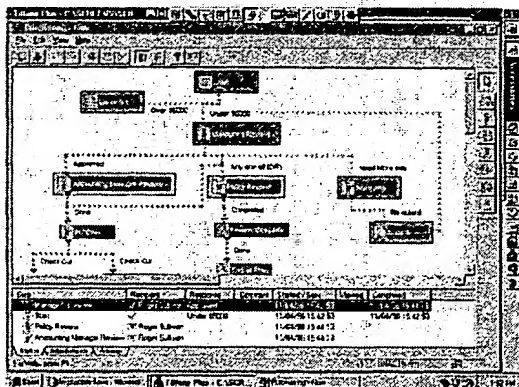
By Barb Cole

THIRD-PARTY SOFTWARE vendors are stepping in to try to satisfy Microsoft Corp. Exchange customers who complain workflow in the messag-

ing server is weak.

Veteran workflow software maker Keyfile Corp. in Nashua, N.H., this week will begin shipping a version of its Keyflow workflow system that is tightly

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With Keyfile's Keyflow workflow system, the status of a process can be monitored while it is in progress

• Users leverage freedom to switch vendors

No loyalty oaths

By Bob Wallace

MANY CUSTOMERS like to stick with one internetworking vendor to avoid the pain of switching, but users warn that product failures, broken promises and poor service will push even the most loyal users into the arms of other vendors.

Although long-term relationships with one vendor often net users considerable benefits, including a voice in product development and a sneak peek at unreleased products, many forsake these benefits after getting left in the lurch by their vendors.

MONEY BACK

"We had an absolute product failure with an Alantec [Corp.] hub on a Friday and had to have a project up the following Monday," said Barry Gillespie, network services coordinator at St. Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis, a large 3Com Corp. shop. "They couldn't get it

CAUSES OF LOST LOYALTY TO VENDORS

- 1 Poor financial performance
- 2 Management changes/restructurings
- 3 Broken promises
- 4 Poor service/support
- 5 Unreliable distributors

fixed in time, so we called our 3Com [value-added reseller], and they bailed us out. We sent the [Alantec] hub back and got our money back."

Gillespie isn't alone.

"I've been trying to get an [Asynchronous Transfer Mode] module for my Cisco [Systems, Inc.] router to work for close to a year and finally put it to them, point blank, that I want my money back," said Bill Horst, chief at the General Services Ad-

No loyalty, page 75

Security upped in Novell server

► NetWare Web Server 3.0 beta demonstrated at Internet World

By Laura DiDio

IN A BID TO boost its presence in the Internet/intranet markets, Novell, Inc. made a series of announcements at last week's Internet World '96 trade show in New York. Novell's centerpiece was a demonstration of the beta version of NetWare Web Server 3.0, due in January.

And as a part of its effort to provide customers preview versions of forthcoming products, Novell also delivered a cached Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) package that will let users more quickly access Internet and intranet document pages.

Novell has buttressed NetWare Web Server 3.0 with its own advanced Secure Sockets Layer level security that encrypts Internet and intranet data transmissions.

Also new in the latest Web Server is a process for authenticating intranet clients in Net-

Ware's Novell Directory Service (NDS), which lets network administrators replicate the rights and access privileges of all users on a network. That means if a user is banned from a particular World Wide Web site, that information will be replicated throughout the directory; network administrators have to key in the information only once.

"That's an incredibly efficient mechanism and a big time-saver," said Bob Sakakeeny, an analyst at Aberdeen Group, Inc. in Boston.

Matt Dillon, network specialist at ITT Fluid Technology Corp. in Morton Grove, Ill., said that type of efficiency is essential for his company's end users.

Novell, page 79

THE FINAL VERSION

- Network Web Server 3.0 will be available in the final version of NetWare 3.11 and 3.12.
- Secure Sockets Layer 4.0 encryption between Web Server and browsers.
- Virtual Hosts for simplified management.
- Increased performance.
- Connectivity to Oracle databases.
- Novelty Search Engine for indexing intranet files.

SAS enhances tool for eyeing performance

By Patrick Dryden

SEEKING TO CATCH up with users' demands for client/server and intranet support, SAS Institute, Inc. last week enhanced its tools for examining the performance of systems and networks.

The developer of analytical business applications is re-vamping an SAS-language data warehouse and reporting suite called Computer Performance Evaluation (CPE).

Now called IT Service Vision, the package reduces the need for multiple SAS products and expertise in the SAS report-

"Now I can download performance data to a PC."
- Susan Fassette, Erie Insurance

SAS tool, page 73

Exchange workflow aided by third parties

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integrated with Exchange. Using either the Keyflow development environment or prebuilt templates, users can build workflow routines that use existing Exchange functions for key application services.

Other workflow specialists, including Reach Software, Inc., Ultimus and FileNet Corp., have also released products in the past few months designed to run on top of Exchange.

Using the underlying messaging infrastructure to route workflow documents is cost-effective and lets companies share the corporate knowledge locked in the messaging system's discussion databases.

For companies that have decided to standardize on Exchange for messaging, those workflow add-ons bolster a key weakness of the messaging

server, users said.

"Other than doing some really ugly stuff with Visual Basic, Exchange does not natively have the capability to route forms or do workflow," said Dave Livingston, Exchange architect at Norwest Services, Inc., the information systems division of Norwest Financial in Minneapolis. Norwest is testing Exchange with 600 users and expects to deploy it across the bank.

Exchange falls short of Norwest's workflow demands because it doesn't offer flexible forms that may be easily knitted together to form workflow routines, Livingston said. But the Exchange "server is a good platform on which to run workflow applications," he added.

A product such as Keyflow is very attractive to Exchange shops, said Chalmers Brown, a

Ten trends affecting the workflow market

- 1 Business process re-engineering
- 2 Move to standards-based software
- 3 Integration of imaging capabilities with applications
- 4 Ubiquitous computers
- 5 Desire for paperless offices
- 6 Migration to client/server
- 7 Growing popularity of optical character recognition
- 8 Low software prices
- 9 Vendor consolidation
- 10 Improved connectivity between workflow systems

Source: Association for Information and Image Management, Silver Spring, Md.

consultant at Adler Consulting Group in New York. "Companies can take advantage of the flexibility of developing workflow apps with Keyflow's easy-to-use tool and still leverage that Exchange backbone," he said.

Nikki Gomez, manager of software services at Standard & Poors in New York, said any workflow application the financial services company installs

has to work well with Exchange. The company is moving 1,500 users to Exchange and evaluating Keyflow.

Gomez said Keyflow caught his eye because of its integration with Exchange. Keyflow workflow forms are registered with an Exchange server, and workflow objects are stored in Exchange folders. Keyflow also uses the Exchange mail

directory services.

Gomez said he considered Notes, which has more evolved workflow support than Exchange. But he said Exchange and the workflow add-ons fit in better with the company's Microsoft-centric computing environment.

A WORK IN PROGRESS

Microsoft has positioned the server as a platform to serve up workflow applications since it began shipping Exchange last April, but so far it has delivered little.

Microsoft will add collaborative features to Exchange in its soon-to-be-released Outlook client, which will enable users to generate forms and route them to others throughout an organization.

Microsoft later this year is expected to publish a set of workflow application programming interfaces for Exchange that will make it easier for software vendors to integrate their workflow offerings with Exchange.

Pricing for Keyflow is \$295 per client and \$3,470 for a server and five-client license.

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